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AN EXCLUSIVE S&MM SURVEY **AMERICA'S BEST SALES FORCES** Page 19.

A new numbers game for co-op advertising

Special Section: Salespeople turn into computer jocks

S&MM

DECEMBER 3, 1984

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Of computers and Cuisinarts

Like it or not, the personal computer has become the newest household appliance. That doesn't mean that it's up there with the VCR or Cuisinart yet, and it'll be a while before the home computer reaches the revered status of say, the dishwasher; but it's happening and it's time we all got used to the idea.

For those of you who, like myself, have occasion to come into contact with these silent, glowing aliens, this news is received with something akin to the feeling the Indians had when introduced to the rifle. It was terribly frightening, but they just *knew* it would turn out to be a handy weapon—if they could only figure out how it worked. Nonetheless, if you deal with statistics, the days of the worksheet and hand calculator are over. A recent survey of subscribers to *American Demographics*, the magazine for anyone who needs a regular demograph-fix, showed that more than 80% of the respondents are already working with microcomputers.

When dealing with demographic or socioeconomic statistics, the two basic things a computer allows you to do are (1) receive information and (2) manipulate it. In the case of data-gathering, there are a number of very useful data bases that one can plug into, and for our purposes, things like the BLS (Bureau of Labor Statistics) Database, Donnelley Demographics, the Trinet data bases (for industrial stats), and U.S. Exports data base provide a wealth of statistical information. Recently, the Census Bureau introduced CENDATA, a data base providing overviews of products, services, related articles, and statistical profiles for those people out there whose need for numbers knows no bounds. Of course, this is just a small sampling of the rapidly expanding list of sources for this kind of information. Access to most of these data bases is available by subscribing to on-line services like CompuServe or Dialog, which offer huge menus of data bases covering all areas of research.

The three basics

Alright, so you have your computer, you're hooked up to the right sources, and the data is yours for the asking—now what are you going to do with it? Anyone who has inadvertently opened a volume of *County Business Patterns* or the *Annual Housing Survey* without some forewarning and a light sedative knows what I mean. Without a way to extract and work with the data you need, having it at your fingertips means very little. Fortunately for us, software designers have been working overtime to bring relief to the weary statistics junkie. In the last two years, dozens of packages aimed at data-manipulators have been introduced, covering everything from A(dvertising) to Z(ip Codes).

Of the basic types of functions available, the most common is the spreadsheet, which allows you to list extracted data in columns, performing simple calculations like percent of change, averaging, and ranking. Some packages contain a great many more features, and the capacity of these different programs varies from one manufacturer to another. Be sure that the package you select has all of the functions you'll be needing. Statistical analysis and demographic analysis software is also on the market, and some packages allow you to plug in different files of demographic statistics according to your particular needs.

The third type of software often used by data drones involves graphics and/or mapping capability. The aspect of visual display is particularly useful for purposes of illustration. In other words, by putting your stats into a graphic context, you can more easily identify trends and shifts over long periods of time. With mapping, certain characteristics can be isolated and plotted on territorial maps, county maps, etc., giving a real geographic framework to what is otherwise just a list of numbers.

So there you have it; the materials are out there if you know what to look for. (You may want to check the directory of sales and marketing applications software in the Computer Special Section beginning on page 61.) The dawn of the computer age has come and gone, and we are now well into the late morning hours. You may want to consider broadening your own horizons before the clock strikes noon and the bell tolls for thee.

By Richard Kern,
Editorial Director, S&MM Surveys

AN EXCLUSIVE S&MM SURVEY

America's best
—and worst—
sales forces

All hail IBM, Kodak, and Pepsi.
All mourn Beatrice, International Paper, and Westinghouse.

It all started last spring with a letter from a reader at a large chemical products company who asked, "Why doesn't S&MM try to find the best sales forces in the country?"

A simple question, but not simple to answer. Still, nine months, 9,000 questionnaires, and several large postage bills later, S&MM editors are satisfied that they have located the slickest of selling machines in 11 different industry groups.

In mid-summer, 850 sales executives from each of those 11 industries received questionnaires asking them to grade the 10 largest companies in their categories on each of 10 different selling functions, such as "holding old accounts," "meeting sales targets," and "quality of management." (Others appear on page 24.) The grades given by the 678 people who responded by the cutoff date ranged from 0 (Poor) to 4 (Excellent), and the scores used to determine the final rankings on the following page represent an average of the 10 overall grades each company received. Generally speaking, any grade of 3.00 or higher is considered very good to excellent in this sampling, while scores at the 2.00 level or lower are fair to poor—much like college grade point averages in which a grade of 4.00 is an "A," 3.00 a "B," and 2.00 a "C."

The winners in many categories were not surprises: IBM in computers and office equipment, Pepsi-Cola USA in food and beverages, and Eastman Kodak in precision instruments. The unexpected names appeared at the bottom of the lists. Beatrice, the Chicago-based consumer products giant which has let it be known on TV and in supermarkets that it intends to be king of the food marketers, apparently still needs lessons in selling. The company's sales force was rated the second worst in its industry, and food and beverage sales executives rated it last in opening new accounts, holding onto old ones, quality of training, and ability to

Because of our special survey, S&MM Short Takes will not appear in this issue.

How they stack up

Forest Products

Rank		Score
1.	Georgia-Pacific	2.54
2.	Champion International	2.48
3.	Boise Cascade	2.47
4.	Scott Paper	2.43
5.	St. Regis	2.41
6.	Kimberly-Clark	2.40
7.	Weyerhaeuser	2.38
(tie)	Mead	2.38
8.	Crown Zellerbach	2.32
9.	International Paper	2.16

Metal Products

Rank		Score
1.	Chromalloy American	2.72
2.	Parker-Hannifin	2.57
3.	Gillette	2.42
4.	Continental Group	2.38
5.	American Can	2.33
6.	Crown Cork & Seal	2.32
7.	CBI Industries	2.31
8.	Foster Wheeler	2.30
9.	Harsco	2.29
10.	National Can	1.87

Chemicals

Rank		Score
1.	Du Pont	2.78
2.	W.R. Grace	2.70
3.	Dow Chemical	2.68
4.	Union Carbide	2.66
5.	Monsanto	2.59
6.	Hercules	2.53
7.	Celanese	2.50
8.	American Cyanamid	2.47
9.	FMC	2.45
10.	Allied	2.40

Diversified Services

Rank		Score
1.	Marriott	2.77
2.	Automatic Data Processing	2.66
3.	Comdisco	2.56
4.	Computer Sciences Corp.	2.53
5.	Waste Management	2.52
6.	Holiday Inns	2.46
7.	Fleming Cos.	2.44
8.	Travelers	2.41
(tie)	Fluor	2.41
9.	Cigna	2.26

Precision Instruments

Rank		Score
1.	Eastman Kodak	2.94
2.	Polaroid	2.84
3.	3M	2.83
4.	Xerox	2.68
5.	Tektronix	2.62
6.	General Signal	2.60
7.	Becton, Dickinson	2.57
8.	Perkin-Elmer	2.50
9.	EG&G	2.36
10.	Lear Siegler	2.31

Electronics

Rank		Score
1.	Motorola	2.70
2.	Litton Industries	2.61
3.	Western Electric	2.60
4.	ITT	2.56
5.	General Electric	2.52
6.	Emerson Electric	2.45
7.	Texas Instruments	2.43
8.	North American Philips	2.33
9.	Raytheon	2.32
10.	Westinghouse	2.19

keep top salespeople. Another disappointment was Westinghouse, whose sales force finished in the cellar of the electronics industry with an overall rating of 2.19, the eighth lowest in the entire survey of 110 company sales forces.

Some top sales forces won hollow victories. Du Pont, for instance, won in chemicals with an average rating of 2.78, yet failed to notch the top spots in the two categories that chemical sales executives said were the most important to running a quality selling operation: reputation among customers and quality of management. W.R. Grace took both those prizes with grades of 3.09 and 2.97, respectively.

One particularly sweet triumph belonged to Pepsi. The company received the highest overall rating of any company in the survey, a 2.95, and took individual honors in five categories within the food and beverage segment, including reputation, opening new accounts, and holding onto old ones. Chief rival Coca-Cola could only manage one blue ribbon—a tie with Pepsi for having salespeople perceived as tops in product knowledge. Sorry Coke, but in selling, *Pepsi* is it.

Industrial & Farm Equipment

Rank		Score
1.	Textron	2.71
2.	Teledyne	2.69
3.	Dresser Industries	2.45
4.	Caterpillar	2.44
(tie)	Kidde	2.44
5.	Ingersoll-Rand	2.42
6.	Baker International	2.41
7.	Deere	2.39
8.	Combustion Engineering	2.31
9.	Borg-Warner	2.22

Computers & Office Equipment

Rank		Score
1.	IBM	2.83
2.	Wang	2.80
3.	Hewlett-Packard	2.78
4.	Burroughs	2.46
5.	Digital Equipment Corp.	2.41
6.	Sperry	2.17
7.	Honeywell	2.13
8.	NCR	2.05
9.	Pitney Bowes	1.96
10.	Control Data	1.93

Pharmaceuticals

Rank		Score
1.	Johnson & Johnson	2.75
2.	Merck	2.71
3.	SmithKline Beckman	2.69
(tie)	Eli Lilly	2.69
4.	Pfizer	2.57
5.	Abbott Laboratories	2.56
6.	Upjohn	2.51
7.	American Home Products	2.49
8.	Bristol-Myers	2.44
9.	Warner-Lambert	2.38

Textiles & Apparel

Rank		Score
1.	Blue Bell	2.79
2.	Levi Strauss	2.74
3.	West Point-Pepperell	2.65
4.	Springs Industries	2.61
5.	Burlington Industries	2.57
6.	Cluett, Peabody & Co.	2.54
7.	J.P. Stevens	2.48
8.	Interco	2.43
9.	Brown Group	2.34
10.	Hartmarx	2.28

Food & Beverages

Rank		Score
1.	Pepsi-Cola USA	2.95
2.	Dart & Kraft	2.39
(tie)	Coca-Cola	2.89
(tie)	Anheuser-Busch	2.89
3.	Nabisco Brands	2.88
4.	General Foods	2.81
5.	Ralston Purina	2.67
6.	General Mills	2.59
7.	Beatrice	2.45
8.	Consolidated Foods	2.38

What the scores mean

Survey respondents were asked to rate each of the top 10 companies in their own industries in 10 different selling functions (see page 24). Grades ranged from 0 (Poor) to 4 (Excellent). Scores for overall rankings represent an average of the 10 grades each company received. Interpret the scores as you would college grade point averages, in which a 4.00 is an "A," 3.00 a "B," and 2.00 a "C."

Sales executives in certain industries often see themselves in a more favorable light than those in other lines of selling. Survey respondents from the food and beverage category gave companies in their industry a high average rating of 2.95 for "reputation among customers." Forest products sales managers, on the other hand, felt that salespeople at the largest companies rated only 2.59 for their collective reputation—maybe because they don't show their faces around customers' offices often enough. Paper and lumber company salespeople rated a sickly 2.19 overall in frequency of calls, a grade just slightly better than the low of 2.14 registered by salespeople at top computer companies.

With the exception of IBM, Wang, and Hewlett-Packard, in fact, computer and office equipment sales forces rated poorly overall. Five companies in this industry sunk below the merely "good" level of 2.00 in "opening new accounts," perhaps a sign of the special struggle computer salespeople face vying against such an entrenched leader as IBM. And in an industry where companies depend

The best and worst in 10 selling categories

(Companies followed by scores, with highest possible score a 4.00)

	Best	Worst

	Meeting Sales Targets		Opening New Accounts		Holding Old Accounts		Frequency Of Calls/Territory Coverage	
Electronics	General Electric	2.69	Litton	2.47	Motorola	2.91	Litton	2.61
	ITT	2.13	Westinghouse	1.93	North American Philips	2.42	Westinghouse	2.11
Pharmaceuticals	Eli Lilly	2.95	Merck	2.59	Johnson & Johnson	3.10	Eli Lilly	2.95
	Upjohn	2.43	Upjohn	2.17	Upjohn	2.56	American Home Products/ Bristol-Myers	2.50
Computers & Office Equipment	IBM	3.14	Wang	2.86	IBM	3.09	IBM	2.52
	Control Data	1.89	Pitney Bowes	1.70	Sperry/ Pitney Bowes	2.07	Control Data	1.79
Industrial & Farm Equipment	Caterpillar	2.48	Teledyne	2.54	Textron	2.86	Textron	2.43
	Baker International	2.09	Borg-Warner	2.04	Borg-Warner	2.24	Combustion Engineering	1.91
Food & Beverages	Nabisco	3.00	Pepsi	2.91	Pepsi	3.18	Pepsi	3.00
	Consolidated Foods	2.35	Beatrice	2.40	Beatrice	2.83	Consolidated Foods	2.20
Textile & Apparel	Blue Bell	2.67	Blue Bell	2.54	Blue Bell	2.86	Blue Bell	2.76
	Hartmarx	2.09	Hartmarx	1.95	Hartmarx	2.15	J.P. Stevens	2.25
Forest Products	Georgia-Pacific	2.77	Champion International	2.48	Boise Cascade	2.78	Boise Cascade	2.40
	International Paper	2.21	International Paper	1.88	International Paper	2.15	International Paper	1.92
Precision Instruments	Polaroid	3.00	Polaroid	2.77	Kodak	3.19	Xerox	2.64
	EG&G	2.25	Lear Siegler	2.18	Lear Siegler	2.00	EG&G	1.86
Chemicals	Du Pont	2.78	Du Pont	2.61	Du Pont	2.77	Union Carbide	2.50
	Celanese	2.31	FMC	2.15	Celanese	2.44	Celanese	2.17
Metal Products	Parker-Hannifin	2.75	Parker-Hannifin	2.86	Chromalloy	2.90	Chromalloy	2.36
	National Can	1.89	Gillette	1.88	National Can	1.75	National Can	1.78
Diversified Services	Marriott	3.00	Marriott	2.86	Marriott	2.82	Automatic Data Processing	2.50
	Cigna	2.35	Cigna	2.12	Travelers	2.27	Cigna	1.81

on constant technological advances for survival, five other sales forces failed to achieve any grades higher than 1.89 for "innovativeness."

It's difficult to draw any concrete conclusions about the diversified services category, which includes a mixed bag of companies such as Holiday Inns, Computer Sciences Corp., and Waste Management. Yet it is safe to say that service company sales managers who responded to the survey have little admiration for insurance salespeople. Two insurance companies, Cigna and Travelers, registered the lowest marks in 8 of the 10 selling categories respondents were asked to grade them on. Cigna was the worst of the two, bottoming out in 6 areas, including training and innovativeness.

One truth that emerged from all industry groups surveyed: It's one thing to assemble a championship

Product/ Technical Knowledge		Reputation Among Customers		Quality Of Training		Ability To Keep Top Salespeople		Quality Of Management		Innovativeness	
Western Electric	3.00	Western Electric	2.91	Motorola	2.79	Motorola	2.55	Motorola	2.71	Motorola	2.77
Westinghouse	2.43	Westinghouse	2.25	North American Philips	2.21	Westinghouse	2.14	Westinghouse	2.24	Westinghouse	1.91
Eli Lilly	3.13	Johnson & Johnson	2.83	Johnson & Johnson	2.96	Johnson & Johnson/ Upjohn	2.64	Merck	2.76	Merck	2.52
Warner-Lambert	2.59	American Home Products	2.24	Warner-Lambert	2.30	Warner-Lambert	2.18	Bristol-Myers	2.23	Bristol-Myers	2.05
Hewlett-Packard	2.93	IBM	3.27	IBM	3.21	Wang	2.67	Wang	3.00	Wang	2.90
Control Data	2.11	Pitney Bowes	2.07	Control Data	1.96	NCR	1.85	Control Data	1.93	Control Data	1.69
Textron	3.00	Textron	3.22	Textron	2.84	Teledyne	2.54	Textron	3.00	Teledyne	2.52
Borg-Warner/Baker International	2.50	Borg-Warner	2.36	Borg-Warner	2.21	Ingersoll-Rand/ Borg-Warner	2.15	Borg-Warner	2.37	Borg-Warner	2.12
Pepsi/Coke	2.91	Pepsi	3.23	Nabisco	3.02	Anheuser-Busch	2.86	Anheuser-Busch/ Dart & Kraft	3.09	Dart & Kraft	2.84
Consolidated Foods	2.41	Consolidated Foods	2.40	Beatrice	2.33	Beatrice	2.33	Beatrice/ Consolidated Foods	2.63	Consolidated Foods	2.16
Levi Strauss/ West Point-Pepperell	3.00	Blue Bell	3.15	Blue Bell	2.85	Springs Industries	2.73	Blue Bell	3.15	West Point-Pepperell	2.83
Hartmarx	2.33	Brown Group	2.39	Hartmarx	2.38	Brown Group	2.21	Hartmarx	2.52	Hartmarx	2.13
Champion International/ Weyerhaeuser	2.70	Weyerhaeuser	2.67	Georgia-Pacific	2.61	Georgia-Pacific	2.43	Georgia Pacific/ Scott Paper	2.68	Georgia-Pacific	2.41
International Paper	2.35	Crown Zellerbach	2.45	International Paper	2.22	International Paper	2.12	International Paper	2.19	International Paper	2.04
3M	3.15	Kodak	3.37	Xerox	3.25	Polaroid	2.85	Kodak	3.22	Polaroid	2.94
Perkin-Elmer	2.33	Lear Siegler	2.36	Lear Siegler	2.42	Lear Siegler	2.09	Lear Siegler	2.33	Lear Siegler	2.15
Du Pont	3.06	W.R. Grace	3.09	Du Pont	2.91	Dow Chemical	2.77	W.R. Grace	2.97	Du Pont	2.88
FMC	2.62	Allied	2.45	Allied	2.32	American Cyanamid	2.33	American Cyanamid	2.39	FMC	2.17
Gillette	2.78	Gillette	2.75	Chromalloy	3.10	Parker-Hannifin	2.78	Chromalloy/Foster Wheeler	2.73	Chromalloy	3.17
National Can	2.00	National Can	2.10	National Can	1.63	National Can	1.75	National Can	1.89	National Can	1.90
Automatic Data Processing	3.09	Marriott	3.05	Comdisco	2.89	Marriott	2.50	Marriott	2.84	Computer Sciences Corp.	2.89
Holiday Inns	2.43	Fluor	2.43	Cigna	2.17	Cigna	2.06	Travelers	2.31	Cigna	2.28

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selling team, but quite another to keep all the players in place. While survey respondents said that the "ability to keep top salespeople" was one of the five most important functions of sales managers, sales forces in nearly every industry group registered their lowest marks in this category. Forest products and computer sales forces fared especially poorly, neither topping an average industry mark of 2.25; and while IBM management rated a 3.21 for the quality of its sales training, it could only manage a 2.59 for keeping top performers in the fold.

Now that you know who the best sales forces in the nation are, you probably want to find out how they got there. S&MM convinced executives at each of these companies to share their tales of sales success, interesting reading you will find on the following pages.

What makes sales forces run?

Of all the qualities salespeople and their managers must develop to rise to the tops of their industries, what is *the* most important?

"There's no single secret reason," snaps back Harry Squasone, a vice president of Pepsi, whose sales force snagged the highest rating of all 110 companies in S&MM's survey. "We don't make our salespeople wear purple ties or anything. We get a great deal of support from other departments of Pepsi, from product development to advertising."

Survey respondents who accepted S&MM's challenge to rank the relative importance of 10 critical factors in running a successful sales organization, however, delivered a clear mandate to three: building a solid reputation among customers, holding onto present accounts, and setting a high standard of management (see table). Nearly half of all sales managers surveyed said these three factors were of extreme importance, though it is interesting to note that less than 5% called *any* of the factors listed "not too important" or "unimportant." The moral is that quality sales managers cannot afford to overlook any details in administering their troops; and while it is difficult to get an executive to admit he delivered his sales force to the top by stressing one or two particular virtues, S&MM gave it a try anyway.

"We have always placed service to our customers first. It's primary," says Ned Brinkman, vice president of sales for Jacobsen, a division of Textron, top finisher in the industrial and farm equipment industry. That's one way to gain the respect of customers, something Textron was rated No. 1 in. Another thing that helped Textron gain its elite ranking was keeping its salespeople well informed about product developments. Textron sales forces placed first in product/technical knowledge, one of the three most important success factors, said respondents in the industrial and farm equipment category. Of course, a knowledgeable sales force is often an experienced one, and Brinkman cites a "special esprit de corps" for holding Jacobsen to a salesperson turnover rate of 5% a year.

A family feeling

At Blue Bell, the force in sales in the textiles and apparel industry, CEO Edward J. Bauman credits high selling standards to a corporate philosophy of tight quality control and meticulous selection of management. He referred S&MM to the "senior statesman" of sales at Blue Bell, Bill Hervey, who is president of Wrangler Menswear. While he stressed that job security offered to managers and salespeople alike engendered a "family aspect" in his sales force, Hervey says they succeed by keeping "dedicated to the idea of Wrangler as a viable brand in the marketplace"—vague, but obviously effective. Blue Bell's sales forces nailed the best ratings in its category for meeting sales targets and opening new accounts—the latter an area in which competition scored lightly in comparison.

Hervey mentions another key area, one where building a high-powered selling machine begins—hiring and training. The Wrangler approach to recruiting focusses on promoting from within. Outside candidates face a half-day battery of testing, including "a rigorous evaluation by company psycholo-

What factors are the most important to running a quality selling operation?

(Base: 678 replies)

Success Factors	% Saying Extremely Important	% Saying Very Important
Reputation among customers	52.5%	23.1%
Holding old accounts	45.0	29.5
Quality of management	44.2	30.0
Ability to keep top salespeople	33.2	38.6
Opening new accounts	32.3	35.2
Product/technical knowledge	28.3	38.5
Meeting sales targets	27.3	34.9
Quality of training	26.1	42.3
Innovativeness	23.3	39.3
Frequency of calls/ territory coverage	15.2	38.2

gists," says Hervey. Training is extensive, and the most highly regarded in the industry. The sales reps labor on a salary plus commission basis, which includes a new program of triple commissions paid to top producers passing their sales projections. And though Hervey says Wrangler's turnover has been a high 30% in recent years, which he attributes to the "Urban Cowboy Phenomenon" ("It caught the whole Western-wear industry with its pants down."), Blue Bell ranks a stalwart second in keeping top salespeople. And in the third most valued quality in sales forces as determined by the body of industrial professionals responding, "quality of management," Blue Bell once again scored first by a wide margin.

Hiring and training was also singled out by William H. Mahar, sales director for the Patients Care Div. of Johnson & Johnson (J&J), whose sales forces placed first among pharmaceutical companies. He says J&J looks for proven salespeople and bright, college-educated prospects with a few years of selling experience. The most attractive candidate, he says, is one who has also achieved success in other endeavors, stable individuals with a positive attitude Mahar believes communicates itself in the field. Once chosen, the recruits are firmly guided through a short period of pure sales training, then are moved on to five weeks in the field, all the while guided by one of J&J's sales trainers. During this period, the new hires continue to attend classes in the evening and on weekends. Following this training, described as intensive by Mahar, the new man is introduced into a territory by the outgoing salesperson. Retraining is scheduled at intervals thereafter. This impressive course of training and field placement has yielded Johnson & Johnson the lead in quality of training in its industry, an attribute rated "very important" by 42% of all survey respondents.

"Miss Horton, my morale needs boosting. Bring in my gold bar please."

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Keep a thick skin

Overall, Mahar painted a picture of a sales force that is happy, well fed, and secure, making for a turnover rate he estimated at 15%. J&J sales forces graded in the middle range in "meeting sales targets," but that trait was voted a low priority by most industries. Interestingly, the pharmaceutical industry rated "quality of management" as its highest priority, and J&J, though topping other categories, finished third in that scoring.

We have looked at the traits deemed most important in building a strong sales force, but what of personal traits needed by the building blocks—the salespeople themselves. Because this topic was not covered by S&MM's survey, we turned to Dr. Stuart Feinberg, an industrial psychologist, for an answer. Salespeople, he says, need, No. 1, the ability to withstand pressure situations; No. 2, resistance to criticism (a thick skin), and No. 3, the assertiveness to close a sale.

And what about managers? "Add to those qualities the ability to motivate," says Dr. Feinberg, "plus a large, well-oiled ego."